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C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 003816

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STATE FOR NEA/ARP, ISN/FO ROOD AND MCNERNY, ISN/CPI FOLEY
DOC FOR DAS WYSONG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/27/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [AE](#)

SUBJECT: MFA REQUESTS USG PRE-CLEAR ALL INTERACTION WITH
UAE COMPANIES

Classified By: MICHELE J.SISON FOR REASONS 1.4 (b&d)

1.(SBU) On September 20, the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent Embassy Abu Dhabi a diplomatic note requesting all USG contact with companies in the UAE be coordinated through and approved by the Ministry of Economy. The dipnote states private companies complained about requests for information from Embassy Commercial Officers -- a likely reference to Department of Commerce, Bureau of Industry and Security (DOC/BIS) pre-license checks and post-shipment verifications.

2.(C) This diplomatic note follows a September 12 meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs between MinEcon U/S Al-Saleh, MFA Director of European, American, and Oceanic Affairs Al-Zarouni and DCM, EconChief, and Econoff. At that meeting, Al-Saleh asked that post work through the UAEG to set up meetings with private companies, especially if discussing "sensitive issues" as opposed to standard trade promotion. In response to DCM and EconChief's contention that these contacts were a normal part of the job and working through the ministries would be unnecessarily onerous for both sides, both Al-Zarouni and Al-Saleh said that they were instructed to have this meeting by "higher-ups." At the meeting, Al-Saleh mentioned an alleged agreement on textiles with the Embassy, whereby the Embassy had agreed to work through the Ministry of Economy before approaching textiles firms as a possible model. His and Zarouni's subsequent comments made clear that textiles were not the major issue.

3.(C) On September 22, Ambassador spoke with DOC/BIS Deputy Assistant Secretary Wendy Wysong about USG response to the dipnote. Ambassador plans to again explain to senior UAEG officials -- including Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan -- the role of DOC/BIS in country. At this time, post does not/not plan to coordinate interactions with UAE businesses through the Ministry of Economy.

4.(SBU) The following is the translated dipnote text:

The UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United States of America.

(Begin informal translation.)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs would like to draw to the Embassy's attention that it has received some complaints from private companies through the Ministry of Economy for receiving queries directly from some commercial officers in the Embassy.

The Ministry requests the Embassy not contact companies in the UAE directly for any information, and any contact must be

through the Ministry of Economy and upon its approval.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Embassy the assurances of its highest consideration.

(End informal translation.)

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